

# National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board

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## DRAFT MINUTES Executive Committee Conference Call

Thursday, June 26, 2008, 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., e.s.t.

**Executive Committee Members Present:** Dr. Martin Massengale, Chair; Dr. Walter Armbruster, Vice Chair, Dr. Martin Apple, Dr. Marianne Smith-Edge, Mrs. Carol Keiser-Long, Dr. Edward Runge, and Dr. Mary Wagner; Dr. Gale Buchanan—represented by Dr. Joe Dunn, Special Assistant to the Under Secretary.

**Executive Committee Members Absent:** Daryl Lund, Dr. David Thomassen, and Dr. Gale Buchanan (Ex-officio),

**NAREEE Board Staff:** Karen Hunter, Executive Director, Mrs. Shirley Morgan Jordan, Program Support Coordinator



### I. Comments and Introduction of New Executive Director

Martin Massengale welcomed everyone on the conference call. Martin Massengale thanked the former Executive Director, Joe Dunn for doing such a wonderful job working two jobs and keeping abreast of the NAREEE Advisory Board activities.

Joe thanked the Board for their understanding and all of their help in completing the work accomplished.

Marin Massengale welcomed and introduced Karen Hunter to the Board. Martin Massengale stated that Karen Hunter is very qualified for the position and he is very happy to have her aboard. Karen Hunter stated that she is happy to accept the Executive Director position and is looking forward to working with the Board

### II. Roll Call of Members and Invitees

Karen Hunter, Executive Director, called roll of the Executive Committee members.

Martin Massengale stated that the Farm Bill increased the NAREEE Advisory Board funds from \$350,000 to \$500,000 annually. He stated that he sees the Board providing a strong role in advising

on prioritization activities within the agencies. He said that the Board needed to be more involved upfront in offering suggestions and advice. He stated that the Board should work more with policy matters. Martin Massengale stated that the Secretary and the Under Secretary said that the Board had a tremendous impact concerning bioenergy and specialty crops with the recent budget and pushing for more research.

Walt Armbruster said that the message was clear from the Hill Staff that research needed to be pushed. They expect the NAREEE Advisory Board to advise REE in a proactive way as a voice from the outside. They reduced the number of members of the Board from 31 to 26 stating that the Board would be more effective and save money. It is unclear how they decide which categories to eliminate.

According to the re-organization, as a result of the Farm Bill, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) will become National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The Board will work with the new Directors when appointed. The Board will also try different approaches and decide on what is the most effective way to work after the reorganization.

### **III. Update on the Committee Activities**

#### **Peer Review Committee**

Ed Runge has emailed Mike Strauss in Cleveland to schedule a conference call on July 9 or 11. The report will not be ready until July for comment.. Martin Massengale stated that members should attend some of the review sessions when they are able to do so.

Marty Apple stated that Board needed to provide some evaluation measures. His suggestions are

1.) Measure Process Input; 2.) Measure Planning inputs – Stakeholders national and state such as in USDA Forest Service; 3.) Research funding: intra- and extramural; 4.) Research outputs (measuring milestones); 5.) Focus on Improvements/enhancement from ARS Research; 6.) Outcomes of USDA-ARS research; and, 7.) Ultimate Outcomes of USDA-ARS R&D (see attachment from Marty Apple detailing the specifics above).

Ed Runge stated that Marty Apple suggested a check list that should improve the review committee's evaluation of ARS' research contributions and serve to enhance their reputation with people controlling funds for the agency.

#### **Rural Economic and Community Development Report**

The Committee is of the opinion that an Executive Summary accompanying a report as we have done in the past works well. This report has been approved and sent to the Secretary and to Congress. Martin Massengale stated that he and Walter Armbruster carried copies of this report to the Hill. The question arose on how the Board can follow up on the recommendations being submitted to the Department and Congress such as the topic dealing with Entrepreneurship. Martin Massengale stated that the Board depends on the Agencies to report back on how they responded. Joe Dunn stated that Dr. Gale Buchanan always asks the Administrators to respond to all reports.

Martin stated that this is a good initial reaction, but wasn't sure if the Board wanted to do a follow up on every report and that question will be up for discussion with the Board at a future meeting. That suggestion will require a little more discussion.

### **Educating the Future Work Force for Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Areas Report**

Marianne Smith Edge apologized for the report still being in the developmental stage. The committee will put out a draft after July 4, 2008. Joe Dunn stated that since Karen Hunter is in that she will take care of the slack in editing. Marianne Smith Edge will call tomorrow to get a framework for the report.

Carol Keiser suggested that the Board limit the reports to two pages for effectiveness.

### **Relevancy and Adequacy of Funds Report**

Daryl Lund gave Joe Dunn his third revision and stated that there is more work to be done with the report. Joe Dunn will help with the revisions along with Karen Hunter. Martin and Walt will take a look at the draft and provide some input. Martin Massengale stated that the report is long and needs to be shorter and that only the highlights and important points need to be captured.

### **Specialty Crop Committee Activities**

The Specialty Crop Committee has identified September 3 or 4, 2008 for the listening session in Canandaigua, NY. Having the meeting in Canandaigua, NY makes it accessible for people to participate from the northeast part of the U.S. Some Specialty Crop Committee and Executive Committee members will attend each meeting. The dates for the two listening sessions to transpire in Mt. Vernon and Ellensburg, Washington are still unclear (**NOTE**: Martin Massengale suggested the Executive Committee be invited to attend one of the three meetings to observe the Specialty Crop committee and obtain firsthand stakeholder input.

### **Protocol and Review Activities**

The group had nothing to report.

## **IV. Update on the Farm Bill**

Mary Wagner asked how much money was allocated for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative. The Request for Proposal (RFP) will be coming out by July 1, 2008. Martin Massengale stated that the Specialty Crop Research Initiative received \$30 million for FY2008, and will receive \$50 million each year in FY2009-2012. The contact for the RFP is Tom Bewick.

Joe Dunn stated that people came from all over to view the displays on The Mall concerning Bio-Energy Research. All the hard work is now paying off concerning bioenergy. REE is seen and heard in places that the Agency wasn't before.

## **V. Board Nominations**

The deadline for NAREEE Board nominations is August 25, 2008. If you would like to be reappointed, you must submit an AD-755 and all papers of support, just like the procedure completed during the initial appointment. It was suggested that a new directory be prepared for members of the board, indicating which categories were eliminated with the passing of the Farm Bill.

#### **VI. Planning for the Fall Meeting**

The Topic for the Fall Meeting will be focusing on “Interaction with the Agency people and the new Directors.”

Carol Keiser stated that it would be a good idea if the Board explored some ideas concerning the needs of the Agencies along with some key points and determine the direction the Board should be going.

#### **VIII. Other Issues**

Martin Massengale stated that if the Board became more proactive, the Board would have more interactions with the Agency (USDA). He stated that the Board may want to provide further testimony on why more money is needed for research. Martin also indicated that Congressional staff members are interested in hearing how Department agencies are responding to Board recommendations.

***The next Executive Committee Conference Call will be July 17, 2008 at 11:00 a.m., Eastern Standard Time.***

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

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MARTIN MASSENGALE  
Chair

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Karen Hunter  
Executive Director

APPROVAL BY ADVISORY BOARD: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Initials  
Chair

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Initials  
Executive Director